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Diamond Cut Diamond
OR,
THE ROUT OF THE ENEMY.

CHAPTER VII.—Continued.

For a moment he was silent, then he spoke again. "And—other things—have failed you?" "And as he asked it, his heart beat oddly and strangely. "Yes, they have failed me," she replied, very slowly. "You mean—you have loved—and you have been—"

"I have been disillusioned," she broke in somewhat abruptly, "after a short moment of silence she added, with a certain harsh coldness, 'I have done with love forever.' "But you have not done with friendship, at least?" he answered. "You still believe in that, do you not? You could still understand that a man might devote his entire life, his whole existence, to your service, his whole being to further your smallest whim, and yet ask for nothing in return from you—for nothing, before God, I say it but for your friendship. Can you believe this?"

For a moment or two she was silent. Something indeed rose chokingly in her throat that stifled her utterance. Something that she was unwilling for him to know. "Mea had often offered her love before, but never such love as this—before to her very heart she felt it. And, yet, perhaps, because she felt it so much, her next words, when she could speak safely, sounded even in her own ears to be shallow and meaningless.

"My dear boy, the age of chivalry is pretty well over I imagine!" "You laugh at me? You reject my friendship?" "No, God knows I neither laugh at you," she replied, quickly, "nor do I refuse to accept what must be, in any case, of infinite value to me."

"I only ask to see you, to be near you, to speak to you now and then, not often, but now and then. Surely it is not much to ask?" he said, very humbly, almost whi-pering the words as he bent towards her.

"Listen to me, Geoffrey," he pressed the hand that rested on his arm as she used his name; but she let that say to you, do not interrupt me. God knows that, for my own sake, your friendship and your presence would be precious things to me, but there are other things. You are young, you have your way to make in the world. Your career is before you. It will hinder you. Believe me, I know far better than you do. I have lived my life, a life of storms and troubles. It will not do for you to mix yourself up in my affairs. You have friends, relations, duties, a life that is opening before you, and with which I can never have anything to do. Believe me, it is wisest and best for us both that we should never willingly meet again."

"Why are you so cruel to me? I broke in impetuously. "What has my life and my career to do with the friends I have made? Surely I have asked for little enough—for little enough—only to be called your friend! You cannot be so cruel as to deny me that small boon."

"Geoffrey," she said once more, "do not let us ask ourselves. What you say to me is very beautiful, and you mean every word of it; but—do not be angry—it is not true! Perhaps I am unwomanly to say it to you, but if I would end in—love—and at the bottom of your heart you know it is so. Now it will not do for you to love me, it would bring you a great deal more sorrow than I should care to be the cause of. I am six years older than you are. I am a Protestant clergyman. I am tied hand and foot by claims which I am unable either to rid myself of, or even to explain to you. And in any case it is an utter impossibility that we should ever respond to your affection, or bring you anything but misery in return for your love. Now do you understand me? Have I spoken plainly enough?"

Her voice had been calm and quiet enough up to the very last. But now, just at that last question, she had spoken a little and trembled. She had spoken very plainly—too plainly perhaps. Was ever woman so brave, and so fearless, or, as she had said, "so wise?" But her words had not the effect which she intended them to have. If they had not been spoken by a little perhaps have deluded himself a little more—have remained wilfully blind a little longer. But now her honest words had brushed all the shams and the cobwebs away. She had told him that she loved him, and he knew that she had told him what was the truth. Her courage only intensified his delight in the love which could no longer remain hidden.

"Well, yes, then," he answered her after a pause, in a low voice of concentrated passion. "I suppose you are right. I should love you—I do love you. I see what it means now; a man does not feel friendship, but love, for such a woman as you are. Perhaps it is as well to know it and to own it, once for all; but after to-night, since you tell me my love is so utterly hopeless, I will never trouble you with it again, never trouble you and devote myself to you just the same. You will know that it is love, but you shall never hear me speak of it again. I swear it to you! You cannot prevent my going on loving you."

"But this is sheer madness," she cried. "Would you spoil your whole life for the sake of a woman who can never be anything to you?" "I would spoil a dozen lives, if I had them to spoil or to spend, for 'List-sake!' he answered passionately. 'List-sake!' now to me, Rose—I do not ask you now to be mine—I do not ask you a question you have said so, I will never hear you speak of it again. I will question you. What you say is law to me for ever—shall ever be so. I will give you your servant, anything, so long as I may see you and speak to you. You cannot stop my loving you any more than you can prevent the sun from shining upon you, or the birds from singing and the flowers from

blossoming about you. My love shall trouble you no more than they do, only you will know it is there—always there. You tell me I am young and my life only beginning—well, it has begun—began and ended in my love for you—as far as love is concerned; that is now a part of myself, I cannot alter or change myself; it will not hurt you. Have you got so much love in your life that you can afford to throw away mine as utterly valueless?"

"No; God knows that I have not," she answered, deeply moved. "God knows that I am lonely enough; but how can I suffer you to sacrifice yourself to me?" "It will be no sacrifice, if you are lonely, as you say, then I shall be able to cheer your loneliness and bring some human interest into your life; that will be enough happiness for me. I ask for nothing better. You will let me come down and see you, will you not?"

How was she to refuse him? She had fought so well, struggled so bravely, but now she could hold out no longer. A garrison that holds a traitor within its walls always gives in at the end, and in Rose's heart there was a secret traitor.

"Right and wrong! Right and wrong! That was what kept on ringing in her heart remorselessly like the beat of a timepiece backwards and forwards. Right and wrong! Right and wrong! Well, she had fought for the right, but the right seemed so hard, and the wrong was so cloaked and disguised that at last it hardly seemed to be wrong at all. Was it worth while to keep up the fight for what was but a shadow at the worst?"

She was so tired, so sad, so lonely, as she had told him; he asked for so little, and he asked it in such a fashion that she could not deny it to him, for he would not be denied. Geoffrey, facing this first great love of his life and grasping it boldly with both hands, grasping it as no longer an adoring boy, younger than herself, he was a man, with all man's purpose and decision. For when once love has been spoken of between a man and a woman, it is the man who becomes her master, and the woman whose glory it is to humble herself before him. Rose de Brefour, who knew life and its pitfalls better than he did—Rose knew this—she knew that a woman who allows and half consents to a man's love is no longer able to dictate terms to him, can no longer keep back the floodgates which she has half opened to him. She knew it, and yet she blinded herself to it—turning her eyes away, stifling down her conscience—beating back with specious arguments the throng of self-conviction which came in to condemn her. That which she might be enabling to regain the position which her own weakness was flinging to the winds.

So along the frozen ice these two, whose destinies were now irrevocably pledged to mingle and to last in each other, glided along in silence, whilst ever they drew nearer and nearer to the gay crowd of skaters with their laughter and their swinging lanterns.

Then Geoffrey pressed the hand upon his arm. "Tell me Rose—I may come?" "You may come, Geoffrey," she answered softly. "Soon? Very soon? When?" he said eagerly. "Fairly soon," she said, smiling. "Next week?" "Yes, next week, if you like."

She withdrew her hand, but he caught it once more and pressed it hard. "God bless you, dear," he murmured. "Did God bless her? Alas, how often do such blessings lay cold upon the hearts we love fall short and never reach their destination. God sent no blessing here. Rather, did angels weep and devils laugh at another self-deception of frail, erring humanity!"

CHAPTER VIII.

Winter was over, and spring was nigh at hand. The sap was rising in the trees, it felt the swollen buds upon a new life, green shoots of crocus and snowdrops shot up on all sides from the brown bosom of the earth, the days waxed longer and lighter, the sun stood up higher in the pale blue sky, a fine white dust whirled about at will, and a keen old English east wind blew unceasingly and cuttingly through the very bones and marrow of the shivering inhabitants of the British Isles.

The Spring of the Poets. Where has it gone, did it ever exist, did they dream of it only? Or, like other and sadder things in our land, has it changed its very essence and being? Where are the "vernal showers," the "green fields that sleep in the sun," the southern breezes, the luxuriance of Spring's air? Have all these things passed and gone from us for ever, or have they never had any existence save in the fantastical imaginations of those whose trade it was to sing about them? Far otherwise comes Spring in these latter days to us. Chills and shiverings, bronchitis and congestions, these are May's messengers now. Hurrying away of those who can fly to warmer climates, groanings and moanings unceasing from those whose business, or whose poverty forces them to remain; Oh, sham sweets of Spring! Oh, false flowers of fancy, that blossom only to be blighted! Oh, all unreal rubbish written about green swarths and reclining thereon! Who were those shepherds and shepherdesses of which our poets have written so amazingly?—who tended their new-born lambs on the thinnest of cotton materials, decked with pink ribbons, and made love to each other upon primrose hedges with a sublime disregard of their own health and immago. In the smallest of their opening for breaking it. Their conversation was sometimes of books

and of art, and sometimes of all of the hundred and one little things that go to make up the daily lives of most of us. Rose talked about her surroundings, her difficulties in housekeeping, the devotion of her French servants, with a quaint yet affectionate familiarity; a little about her duty and her devotion to the old man upstairs—but never about her past; that was a sealed book to him. On the other hand, Geoffrey was easily beguiled into laying bare the whole history of his existence to her. Rose heard all about the autocratic uncle whom he served, and the aunt whose fate he sincerely pitied, and who was always affectionate to him; also about his own hitherto unspoken hope of being eventually taken into partnership, and becoming a rich man in consequence. Rose heard too, all about the Miss Hallidays—how pretty and pleasant they were, how well they suited, what a sympathetic voice Angel had, and how her beautiful nature had somehow reminded him of herself. She was never tired of hearing about them.

"You will marry one of them some day," she said to him once, with a confident little nod. To be Continued.

About the House.

THE FLOWERS' BALL.

There is an olden story. 'Tis a legend so I'm told. How the flowers gave a banquet In the ivied days of old; How the posies gave a party once That wound up with a ball. How they held it in a valley Down in "Flower Kingdom Hall."

An orchestra of Blue Bells Sat upon a grassy knoll And pealed forth gentle music That quitted every soul. The Holly captured a pistol. Just to buy a suit of clothes, And danced with all the flowers, But the modest, blushing Rose.

The Morning Glory shining Down and reflecting the glow Of dawn, and took a partner; It was young Miss Mistletoe, Miss Maggie Nolia from the south Danced with Forget-me-not; Sweet William took Miss Pink in tow And danced a slow gavotte.

Thus everything went swimmingly 'Mongst perfumed belles and beaux. And every blossom reveled save The modest, blushing Rose. Miss Fuchsia sat around and told For floral emulation. That she had actually refused To dance with A. Carnation.

The Coxbomb, quite a dandy there, Began to pine and mope. What he had been introduced To young Miss Heliotrope. Sir Cactus took Miss Lily out. And he swung her so about. She asked Sweet Pea to Cauliflower And put Sir Cactus out.

Miss Pansy took her Poppy And she waltzed him down the line Till they ran against the old Sunflower With Miss Honey-suckle Vine. The others at the party that Went whirling through the mazy, Ware the Misses Rhode Dendron, Daffodil and Little Daisy.

Miss Petunia, Miss Verbena, Violet, Miss Miss Miss Dahlia. Came fashionably late, arrayed In very rich regalia. Miss Begonia, sweet Miss Buttercup, Miss Lilac, and Miss Clover; Young Dandelion came in late When all the feast was over.

The only flower that sent regrets And really couldn't come, Who lived in the Four Hundred, was The vain Chrysanthemum. One grew quite ill, we must regret. And every posy wondered, too, Just what Miss Mignonette.

Young Tulip chose Miss Orchid From the first, and did not part, With her until Miss Mary Gold Fell with a Bleeding Heart. But ah! Miss Rose sat pensively 'Till every young man passed her. When set to fill the last quadrille, The little China Aster.

HOLIDAY GAMES.

It is quite as necessary to have a prearranged order and a leader appointed for the games and simple amusements before the evening arrives, as for musical and literary programmes. Otherwise much time is lost in useless and confusing discussion, and there is a lack of harmony and smoothness. An older sister or a maiden aunt or a spinster friend is usually called to this office. A few clever women with peculiar grace in this direction have, in smaller towns, added considerably to limited incomes by undertaking for a fair sum to direct and manage the games and amusements, the home dances, the music, and the story-telling during holiday times or when, for any reason, the mother or hostess wished to be assisted or relieved. At the various sanitariums there is usually an entertainment committee, a few of the stronger patients and the caretakers managing the different evenings, so as to relieve them of monotony and tedium.

The book game carried out in a variety of ways is full of fun and gives considerable play for originality. Each person chooses for himself the name of a book he is to represent in charade or costume, or by a drawing. With the entire absence of ability to draw the result is sometimes startling. Let us say, for instance, "Paradise Lost," with a large square of white paper tacked against the wall. Over a five-barred meadow-gate the would-be artist draws something with a strange kinship of appearance to the field "scarcrow," and two diminutive figures below are fleeing from this Angel of Justice. Two or three inferior creatures soon after hobble through the room asking for alms, nodding and shaking their heads and crutches when refused. A good deal of puzzling and guessing follows. A sheet of paper was passed about on which in a circle around a blank centre was written the little word "A-do." Could not one make out of this "Much Ado About Nothing?" Over the "Tea-Cups" admits a capital working-out, as does also the "Descent of Man" coming down a step-ladder. "The Lady of Quality" gives room for some fine airs and head-tossings in old-fashioned bonnet and shawl. "Under the Red Robe" is an easy title to suggest, and a good part in the hands of a romping, lively maiden would be "The Circus Lively Maiden would be."

NO PRISONS NEEDED.

Inevitable State of Public Morals in Ireland In Ireland there are no prisons, and the inhabitants are so honest in their habits that such material defenses to property, as locks, bolts and bars are not required. Yet its history for the past 1,000 years records no more than two thefts.

Of these two cases one was that of a native who was detected after stealing several sheep; but as he had done so to supply his family, who were suffering for want of food, when he had broken his arm, provisions were furnished to them, and work was found for him when he was able to do it, and he was placed under medical care; but the stigma attached to his crime was considered sufficient punishment.

The other theft was made by a German, who stole 17 sheep. But as he was in comfortable circumstances, and the robbery was malicious, the sentence passed upon him was that he should at once sell all his property.

NOT NUMEROUS.

What is a phenomenon, or a phenomenon? Well, a woman who buys a hat in the first milliner she comes to.

INEXPENSIVE CANDIES.

Santa Claus deals out candy very sparingly to some children. He either thinks it hurtful or his finances get low before he makes the rounds. The following recipes can meet with his approval in either case. Candied Hickory-nuts.—Pick out one quart of hickory-nut meats, and be careful not to let tiny pieces of shucks fall in. Beat the whites of two eggs, and add one half cupful of fine granulated sugar; pour this frosting over the nuts, mix carefully, and spread on a platter; scatter over dry sugar, and stir them until the meats do not stick together, then set in a cool place to dry.

Maple-sugar Taffy.—Let maple molasses boil until it will stiffen when dropped into cold water; then take from the stove and set the dish or kettle where it will cool as rapidly as possible. Do not stir the syrup until it has become quite a thick wax, and then with a paddle or stout spoon stir until white and hard. An addition of hickory-nut meat to the wax before stirring greatly improves it, and prevents the success in making taffy lies in preventing it from becoming grainy. To accomplish this do not stir the molasses any until it is sufficiently boiled and then cooled. If an inch in depth around the top of the pan is buttered the syrup will not boil over.

Cream Candies.—Beat together the white of one egg and two tablespoonsfuls of sweet cream; then add confectioners' sugar until the batter is thick enough to work with the hand. Rub sugar over the palms of the hands, then roll out little balls of the candy, the size of marbles, flatten, and press a half walnut, hickory-nut or almond meat into the top; place on buttered sheet of paper, and dry over a fire, as the paste dries out quickly, and cannot then be made into such nice shapes as when moist.

HOUSEHOLD HINTS.

To Remove Acid Stains from Cloth.—Use liquid ammonia on a small piece of flannel; rub the stain gently. To Drive Away Mice.—Powdered camphor placed in the haunts of mice will drive them away, as they dislike the smell. Lotion for Whitening the Neck and Arms.—Half ounce borax, 4 ounces glycerine, 3 pint orange-flower water. Mix thoroughly.

To Seal Letters Safely.—A letter fastened with the white of an egg can not be opened by the steam of boiling water like ordinary gum. The heat of the steam only adds to its firmness. A Good Tonic for the Hair.—Five grains sulphate of quinine, 1 drachm mixture of cantharides, 1-2 ounce bay rum, 2 drachms glycerine, water to 3 ounces. Mix thoroughly, and shake the bottle before using. After using an umbrella on a wet day never leave it open to dry, as it causes the silk to crack, but stand the umbrella with the handle downward in a tin bath to drain, and when nearly dry open for a few minutes. When decenterers are stained with port wine they should be cleaned with a wineglassful of warm water, to which has been added a large teaspoonful of oxalic acid; shake the bottle well, then rinse in clean lukewarm water.

To Remove Mildew on the Vine and Other Plants.—Finely powdered sulphur sprinkled over the leaves, and water of the vine, effectually destroys mildew, and that without fire in the greenhouse. The same means has cured the hop mildew.

HEAVY HORSES.

One in New York Weighing Over a Ton and a Half. A Clydesdale exhibition recently in New York is without a doubt the heaviest horse in the world. He weighs 3,000 pounds. This monster is 20 1-2 hands high, and, although only 5 years old, measures 32 inches round the arm, 45 inches round the stifle or knee joint, 95 inches girth, 34 1-2 inches round the hip and 11 feet 4 inches in length. It was of perfect proportions, with a head 36 inches in length. A British dray horse has been known to stand 18 hands high and weigh nearly 18 cwt.; while one of Wombwell's menagerie horses was once shown at Oxford, measuring 17 hands 3 inches in height. The Thames Bank Distillery at the Cart Horse Parade of 1895 exhibited a hand-some pair of bays, each of which stood 18 hands high and weighed nearly a ton. The weight of the average horse, according to an authority, is from 600 pounds to 1,500 pounds.

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